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THE BLIND AMERICAN

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READERS FOR BLIND FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

By Dr. Melvin T. Johnson

(Editor's note: Dr. Johnson, Medical Director of the United States Civil Service Commission, has kindly submitted the following article in response to a request of THE BLIND AMERICAN for practical information on the workings of the significant new reader-assistant law.)

On August 29, 1962, the President signed Public Law 87-614, an Act "to authorize the employment without compensation from the Government of readers for blind Government employees." The purpose of this law is to improve employment opportunities in the Federal service for qualified blind persons by removing obstacles that heretofore have restricted their employment opportunities.

Public Law 87-614 authorizes heads of agencies to employ reading assistants for blind employees "without regard to the civil service laws and the Classification Act of 1949, as amended." The reading assistants will serve without compensation from the Government. They may serve on a volunteer basis, or they can be paid out of the personal funds of the blind employees, or by any nonprofit organization. For this purpose, the law specifically waives the restriction in section 1914 of Title 18, U. S. Code.

The Commission believes that Public Law 87-614 should increase employment opportunities for the blind. The law should, in turn, be of benefit to the Government by enabling it to use the services of personnel who could not otherwise be employed. The determination to use the authority in the law is, by terms of the law itself, within the discretion of department and agency heads.

Public Law 87-614 authorizes department heads to "employ, without regard to the civil service laws and the Classification Act of 1949, as amended, a reading assistant or assistants for any blind employee of such department, to serve without compensation from such department."

The Commission views this provision as a statutory exception to all the normal selection and appointment procedures that are based on the Civil Service Act and the Veterans' Preference Act, provided appointees are employed without compensation from the Government

to serve as reading assistants to blind employees of the agency. Under the law agencies could, if they chose, establish a staff of volunteer workers to provide reading assistance to blind employees on the rolls. Alternatively, agencies could permit the blind employee to engage the services of his own reader. Under either arrangement, an employer-employee relationship would be established between the agency and the reading assistant.

Reading assistants appointed under the provisions of Public Law 87-614 may be given excepted appointments of such duration and under such conditions as the agency may determine. Reading assistants to incumbents of sensitive positions are, themselves, subject to security clearance.

Since appointees serve without compensation, no retirement deductions are made. However, if the reading assistant serves on a full time or substantially full time basis, this service will become creditable for retirement purposes if he later becomes eligible for retirement coverage in a salaried position. Appointees are excluded from life insurance and health benefits coverage.

The procedures under which the blind candidate himself may apply for Federal employment will not be changed. Such an applicant must qualify as before under competitive standards and be certified to an agency for employment. Coordinators for employment of the physically handicapped will continue to make every effort to place blind candidates in positions for which they are qualified.

Once the blind candidate has been accepted for employment in a position which would require him to have a reader, the new law will become a factor. Selection of such a reader, to be paid by the blind employee or by a nonprofit organization, will be a matter to be decided between the blind employee and the employing agency.

Each Federal agency will establish its own procedures for selection of readers. We have every reason to assume that agency administrators will make every effort to approve the reader selected by the blind employee, subject to whatever security requirements must be met.

Use of readers who will be Federal employees but who will not be on the Federal payroll could conceivably cause some administrative problems. Should such problems arise, they will be solved in the

agency where the blind employee works, but the Civil Service Commission will be prepared to furnish guidance as needed. We feel that the spirit of the new law will prevail and that the incidence of administrative problems will be kept at a minimum. The potential good which will result from the act should far outweigh any problems which might arise.

CALIFORNIA SHELTERED SHOP OUSTS BLIND WORKERS

Forty blind employees of the Berkeley workshop of California Industries for the Blind were abruptly laid off during May as an apparent result of their organization into a union and subsequent agitation for a pay raise.

The sudden shutdown of the plant's broom-making division was alleged by plant officials to be unrelated to labor union activities and attributed solely to an "oversupply" of the brooms on the market.

But spokesmen for the AFL-CIO State Employees Union, representing 76 of the 85 sightless shop workers, have pointed out that the layoffs -- the first in the factory's history -- came immediately on the heels of union organization and of a recent work stoppage by employees which resulted in higher piece-rate wages.

Union efforts to negotiate the reinstatement of the ousted workers along with recovery of \$2,400 in lost earnings since the May 16 shutdown have been flatly rejected, these spokesmen said, thus raising the possibility of strike action to secure the rights of the 40 jobless blind persons. The union was said to have no alternative but to request authority for a strike from the Alameda County Central Labor Council.

"We don't advocate striking a state agency but the status of these people has to be clarified," union regional director Tom Hardwick stated. He added that the labor council would not be able to act on the strike request before June 3.

Officials of the sheltered workshop have maintained that the

layoffs were based on an overproduction of brooms and a poor market demand. In selling on the open market the plan competes with brooms manufactured in Mexico and Italy at prices equal or below those of the state workshops, according to Emmet Copeland, manager of the Berkeley factory.

But union spokesmen point to the fact that the objective of the sheltered workshop is not to make a profit but to rehabilitate and assist blind workers in becoming self-sufficient. Like the two other state-operated workshops in California, the Berkeley plant is officially established as a nonprofit agency.

The workshop trouble began early in May when the broom-makers, newly organized with other shop workers in the State Employees Union, stopped production in order to enforce their demand for a raise from 11 cents to 15 cents per broom. Although a wage boost was later granted by shop managers, its effect appears to have been defeated by the shutdown of broom production.

Some workers in the Bay Area shop are paid on an hourly basis rather than by piece rates, for turning out such products as pillow cases, ironing board covers, aprons and pot holders. But in all cases wages are tied directly to sales, with no minimum pay scale.

When sales go down, the blind employees cannot work, union spokesmen have observed. And when a machine breaks down, they have to stand around without pay. Average income to blind shopworkers was said to approximate \$1.19 an hour, with some individuals receiving much less.

Shop manager Stuart acknowledged that "the pay may be substandard" but added: "So are the workers." He maintained that the shop tries to keep up to the federal minimums (\$1.00 to \$1.25 an hour), "but some just can't earn it."

Although employees' earnings are tied to the sales of their products, factory administrators are paid directly from the \$170,000 state subsidy provided the factory annually and thus are independent of sales or production, according to union officials. These administrative costs were said to be continually rising, and although the plant showed a profit of \$2,000 last year it has generally lost money -- reportedly as much as \$40,000 in recent years.

SEVEN VITAL BILLS BEFORE CONGRESS

Seven bills embodying important legislative objectives of the organized blind have now been introduced into the present session of Congress and are awaiting action by the appropriate committees of the House and Senate, according to a bulletin issued by President Russell Kletzing of the National Federation of the Blind.

Heading the list of affirmative proposals to advance opportunities for the blind is a new "King bill," H.R. 6245 -- introduced by California Congressman Cecil R. King -- designed to amend titles X and XVI of the Social Security Act in order to "more effectively encourage and assist blind individuals to achieve rehabilitation and restoration to a normal, full, and fruitful life."

The King bill's specific improvements in blind aid are: it abolishes responsibility of relatives, liens, and residence requirements; requires states to fix a floor for aid and to meet individual needs above that floor; allows the states under title XVI to retain separate standards and separate administration, and to secure improved medical sharing; increases federal matching, and provides that new case services not be tied to the aid grant, be given only if requested, and be adapted to the problems of the blind.

Other bills before the House and Senate would: grant a tax exemption for individuals supporting a blind dependent (H.R. 1659); give tax exempt status to organizations engaged in work for the blind (H.R. 97); provide federal funds for special education of disabled children (H.R. 4640); assign vending-machine income to operators of vending stands, and provide machinery for appeals (S. 12 and S. 394); and allow disability benefits after only a year and a half of covered employment (S. 1268).

Details of NFB-Sponsored Bills

1. H.R. 6245, the new King bill, proposes to: remove the 12-month limitation on the exemption of additional income and resources of blind recipients having an approved rehabilitation plan for self-support;

-- abolishes the responsibility of relatives, and stipulates that only voluntary contributions actually made to blind recipients be treated as income;

-- frees blind recipients from subjecting their property to liens or transfers as a condition of eligibility;

-- provides that individual needs be presumed to be no less than a fixed amount, to be set by each state in accord with its own conditions; and provides that, if the actual needs of any eligible recipient are higher, he receive an amount sufficient to meet them;

-- insures that title XVI shall not be interpreted to prevent a state from having different assistance standards and eligibility requirements for any category included in the combined plan;

-- permits a state making use of title XVI to have a separate program for the blind and to receive federal matching money for its blind cases under that plan, along with the full federal financial benefits of averaging and medical-care participation;

-- permits the states to designate an agency other than the state welfare department to administer a separate plan of aid to the blind;

-- provides (as titles I and XVI now do) for federal financial participation up to one-half of a total of \$15 monthly medical-care expenditure for blind aid cases in states which retain their categorical program under title X;

-- makes it possible for a state which adopts title XVI, and subsequently becomes dissatisfied with it, to resume separate categorical aid programs under titles I (aged), X (blind) and XIV (disabled);

-- requires that new (1962) social services be given only to recipients who request them; that the amount of the aid grant not be made contingent upon acceptance of any such services, and that they be administered to recipients within their separate categories according to their distinctive needs;

-- provides for increased federal matching funds, to the extent of 6/7 of the first \$50 and from 50 to 75 percent (variable-grant formula) of the difference between \$50 and \$100;

-- requires that any increase in federal financial sharing in blind-aid payments be given only upon condition that the additional

money be passed on by states to recipients without lessening the states' share in aid payments;

-- prohibits the imposition of any residence requirement in aid to the blind.

2. H.R. 5706, introduced by Congressman Walter S. Baring (Nevada), prohibits state residence requirements as a condition of eligibility for aid to the blind.

3. H.R. 1659, introduced by Congressman King, amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow an additional exemption to a taxpayer supporting a blind dependent.

4. H.R. 97, introduced by Congressman Eugene J. Keogh (New York), exempts organizations for the blind from paying federal excise taxes -- as now permitted to educational institutions.

All the foregoing bills are under the jurisdiction of the House Ways and Means Committee, Honorable Wilbur D. Mills, Chairman, House Office Building, Washington 25, D. C.

5. H.R. 4640, introduced by Congressman John E. Fogarty (Rhode Island), provides federal funds to strengthen programs of special education of all categories of disabled children, including support for scholarships, college training programs, research and demonstration projects. The bill is under the House Committee on Education and Labor, Honorable Adam Clayton Powell, Chairman.

6. S. 12, introduced by Senator Jennings Randolph (West Virginia) and co-sponsored by Senators Robert Byrd (West Virginia) and Caleb Boggs (Delaware), provides for establishment of a presidentially-appointed appeals board under the Randolph-Sheppard Act, and for exclusive assignment of vending machine income to blind stand operators. (An identical bill, S. 394, was the subject of hearings last June by the Senate Committee on Government Operations, and may yet be favorably acted upon.) Communications should be addressed to the Honorable John McClellan, Chairman, Committee on Government Operations, Senate Office Building, Washington 25, D. C.

7. S. 1268, introduced by Senator Hubert Humphrey

(Minnesota) and co-sponsored by Senators Jacob Javits (New York) and Jennings Randolph, liberalizes disability insurance cash benefits to the blind (under title II) by requiring only six quarters (a year and a half) in covered employment for eligibility -- as opposed to the present requirement of five years, plus proof of physical inability to work. The bill is under the Senate Finance Committee, the Honorable Harry F. Byrd, Chairman.

CONGRESSMAN KING URGES AID REFORMS

"This bill is a continuation of my efforts, since becoming a Member of the House of Representatives, to change blind-aid programs and to make of them, not programs offering mere marginal subsistence and static survival, but . . . directed toward encouraging blind-aid recipients to achieve rehabilitation and restoration to a normal, full and fruitful life."

With these words, Congressman Cecil R. King of California introduced on May 13 his comprehensive measure (H.R. 6245) designed to improve the social security programs of aid to the blind in the direction of removing present barriers and providing new incentives toward self-sufficiency and self-support. (For specific provisions of the new King bill, see the article immediately preceding.)

Recalling the rehabilitative goals set forth in President Kennedy's welfare proposals of 1962, Congressman King observed that his bill "would incorporate this high purpose into state programs of blind aid. It would help blind people who are in need to work toward rehabilitation, and ultimately to achieve for many complete liberation from any dependence at all upon public relief."

He noted that previous Congresses had adopted proposals of his to make blind aid a positive rehabilitative force. "Because of this, blind people in need have been given increased opportunities to live with decency and dignity, to attain rehabilitation and restoration to regular and contributing lives in the community. But much still

remains to be done . . . if these programs are to offer more than relief from want to these people."

Title XVI Opposed

Scoring the so-called optional category of Title XVI which would consolidate programs for the blind, the aged and the disabled, the California legislator asserted that the needs of these three recipient groups "are so different and distinctive that they must be satisfied by solutions based upon the separate categorical approach."

He expressed the belief "that many blind persons who are now aid recipients possess a potential for the attainment of full self-support, but few of these, I think, will realize this potential if they are to be lumped together, if their needs are to be considered and administratively treated as identical to those whose potential for achieving self-support is very slight in today's competitive world."

Congressman King emphasized that several provisions of his new bill are intended to "preserve, protect and reinforce" the categorical approach to public assistance for the nation's 400,000 sightless citizens. He called attention to his proposal removing the 12-month limitation on exempt income for blind recipients having a rehabilitation plan, and added:

"Whether a person is sighted or sightless, certainly it takes more than one year to get a firm foothold in a new economic venture. It takes longer than 12 months for a lawyer or an insurance agent, a salesman or newsstand operator to establish himself in a new business endeavor.

"I believe that, when a blind person enters into the practice of a profession or establishes a new business, all of the income from such activity should be available to strengthen the person's position in the new business -- to buy inventory and equipment, to purchase law books, to hire readers. I believe that none of the income should be used to reduce the blind person's aid grant until self-support has been achieved from the business activity."

Example of California

In support of his recommendations for liberalization of the blind aid program, Congressman King pointed to the experience of

his own state of California with its additional program of aid to the potentially self-supporting blind financed solely by state funds. Under that program more liberal exemptions of income, property and resources are allowed to recipients in order to encourage the goal of full self-sufficiency.

"Since this program was established in California [in 1941], a considerable number of blind participants in the program have attained full economic self-sufficiency," the legislator pointed out. "And in the overwhelming majority of these cases, many months in excess of a year were required to gain this most desirable end."

He noted that "if the federal requirement which limits the exemption of additional income and resources to 12 months had been applied to the 49 now self-supporting blind persons in California, 40 of them would still be on the welfare rolls, perhaps to remain there all of their lives."

In explaining another of his projected reforms -- the proposal for a minimum floor of aid for all applicants above which particular individual needs may be assessed -- Congressman King declared that "the basic needs for the very necessities of life of blind-aid recipients are not being fully met in most states, let alone any special needs incident to blindness.

"The unusually low amount of the average grant in the nation means that even a subsistence compatible with decency and health is not being provided under the state programs of blind aid," he said. "In order to further the purpose of self-support and self-care, aid to the blind should be granted on the basis of equal minimum payments to all blind recipients, to serve as a floor of protection against physical deprivation.

"Thus, the minimum amount of aid would be derived from the demonstrated needs of the group of recipients, rather than the demonstrated needs of the blind individuals. The special circumstances of the blind individual would be taken into consideration for aid grants above the minimum amount."

The California lawmaker expressed his belief that "through the device of the fixed minimum grant of aid, the dignity and integrity of the aid recipient, as well as his right to privacy, are safeguarded; he is no longer subjected to the individualized investigation and

discretionary judgment of the social worker, but is regarded as a member of a group, entitled to be treated in a manner prescribed by law."

HEW "Deception" Hit

In his House speech introducing H.R. 6245, Congressman King charged officials of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare with bad faith in their original presentation of the optional joint category under title XVI. He declared that Congress had been assured that the new title "would serve only as a bookkeeping arrangement, that it was intended to simplify the administration of public assistance by furnishing a convenient package plan for federal financial participation for all three adult categories.

"However, in an official bulletin purporting to interpret the 1962 public welfare amendments, the Department has made it abundantly clear that the new public assistance title was really not intended merely to make procedural changes in the administration of programs of aid to the blind, aged, and disabled, but it was the Department's intention to make substantive changes in existing programs -- changes so far-reaching that, I believe, they would have disastrous consequences for the nation's needy blind citizens.

"Despite its own earlier protestations to the contrary, and despite the absence of any wording in the law to support it, the Department has ruled that the combined state plan filed under title XVI must lay down a common standard for determining need and payments for all three adult categories of aid," he asserted.

Pointing to the exception to this ruling specifically granted by the Department for the five states which have existing separate agencies or commissions for the blind, Congressman King inquired: "If these five states can have different standards for the blind -- if the differing objectives and characteristics of the blind program are recognized as valid for these five states -- why is this principle not extended to the remaining 45 states as well? I believe that it should be. I believe that it must be."

Another federal ruling strongly criticized in Congressman King's speech was that a state's decision to combine its adult programs under title XVI is "irrevocable" and hence precludes any subsequent return to the separate categories of aid to the blind, aged and disabled respectively.

"The word 'irrevocable' is a very strong word," the Congressman declared. "It is a very final word. It means there can be no turning back once a choice has been made -- no matter how good the reasons might be for turning back.

"However dissatisfied the state welfare people might be with their consolidated category of aid under title XVI -- however much they might be convinced, after experience under title XVI, that they are unable to meet the needs of their needy citizens -- in spite of all this, they must continue to administer their aid program under it."

Pointing out that the new joint category has been described in all official explanatory material as an "optional" plan, Congressman King asserted: "I fail utterly to see anything 'optional' about a state plan which makes a choice to accept it an unchangeable, an irrevocable choice."

He maintained that "the present provision of irrevocability" with respect to title XVI is a "derogation" of the essential purposes of public assistance and therefore "should be struck from the law."

NFB CONVENTION: ADVANCE REPORT

(Editor's note: Following is the partial text of a bulletin released by the National Federation of the Blind.)

The 1963 convention at Philadelphia promises to be one of the best ever, with all of the old-time atmosphere of friendliness, harmony, and purpose. Members and friends of the N. F. B. who have not yet done so are urged to send in their reservations without delay.

The convention will begin on the morning of Wednesday, July 3, and will close at five o'clock on Saturday afternoon, July 6. Business sessions will be held on Wednesday morning, Wednesday afternoon, Thursday morning, Thursday afternoon, Friday morning, Saturday

morning and Saturday afternoon. The banquet will be held Thursday evening, and Friday afternoon will be devoted to tours.

The convention will headquarter at one of Philadelphia's finest hotels -- the Sheraton, 1725 Pennsylvania Boulevard, Philadelphia 3, Pennsylvania, telephone LOcust 8-3300. Room rates are reasonable and the accommodations are truly luxurious. The hotel is a small city within itself, containing stores, shops, and a variety of other services. Five restaurants are located within the hotel: A truly excellent German restaurant featuring imported draft beers and German foods; a fine French restaurant with an impressive wine list; a delightfully quaint London chop house called the Cheshire Cheese; the Town Room; and the Minute Chef. The Minute Chef Snack Bar, located in the hotel, is open 24 hours a day.

Transportation

The Suburban Station Building is directly east of the Sheraton which is the main station of the Pennsylvania Railroad and has underground passage ways leading to the hotel. Airlines will make available free limousine service to the convention hotel. Bus terminals are to be found at 13th and Filbert Streets and 17th and Market Streets, the latter being directly in front of the Sheraton.

Restaurants

Horn & Hardart is located on 16th Street above Market Street, one block east of the hotel. This restaurant has reasonable rates and good food, specializing in twenty-nine cent breakfasts. Just a few steps north of Horn & Hardart's is Stouffer's Restaurant, which serves medium priced cuisine and cocktails. Within one and a half blocks south of the hotel is the Steak House, specializing in steak dinners for \$1.29. Going three blocks south of the hotel on 17th Street is the Pub Tiki, reknowned Polynesian restaurant. For additional hints on "What's Cooking" be sure to pick up your free copy of "We The Blind" at the lobby of Convention Hotel.

Tours

Number 1 - Independence National Historical Park

Historical Sites included in the Park are: Carpenter's Hall, Christ Church in Philadelphia, Congress Hall, Dilworth-Todd-Moylan House,

Franklin's Grave, Independence Hall (Birthplace of U. S. Declaration of Independence adopted and Constitution written here, and a chance to touch the Liberty Bell). Take time to visit some of the oldest churches in the country, for instance, Old Saint Mary's Church, Old Pine Street Presbyterian Church, Old St. George's Methodist Church, Old St. Joseph's R. C. Church.

Number 2 - Brandywine Park & John J. Tyler Arboretum Gardens

Enjoy the patriotic and unusual: Brandywine Park. Witness again one of our significant battles for independence, be among the soldiers and celebrities in their original homes and headquarters. Cross the creek with General Washington. Stand under one of the nation's oldest and most impressive trees. Then on to The John J. Tyler Arboretum Exotic Gardens, to stroll leisurely through fenced lined acres of floral and fragrant beauty. Read for yourselves the Braille identification of each exotic flower and plant.

Number 3 - The Overbrook School for the Blind

Welcome to the lengthy list of proud and inspired visitors to Overbrook School for the Blind, second oldest and first most beautiful residential school in America. Built according to Spanish Architecture, Overbrook contains numerous sights and sounds which have happily endowed the lives of thousands of sightless citizens of the world.

Number 4 - George Washington's Encampment at Valley Forge

At Valley Forge, stops will be made at Washington's Headquarters; Washington Memorial Chapel; and Mt. Joy Observatory Tower, tallest point of land at Valley Forge. You will see many statues, monuments and huts, replicas of those used by the Continental Army during the winter of 1777-78.

Extra Attractions

Betsy Ross' House: The home of Seamstress of our first American Flag. Fels Planetarium: Exciting shows explore stars daily. Franklin Institute: See the science museum and other interesting exhibits. Philadelphia Museum of Art: Admire the priceless paintings and statuary of the world. Rodin Museum: Observe the largest collection of Rodin sculpture outside of France. University Museum: Contains collections from prehistoric times to the fall of Rome. Lumadrama: Spectacular sound and light exhibition,

depicting the birth of the United States.

Summer in Chinatown: Enjoy a delightful evening of the crafts and customs of the Far East. (All those interested in this free tour, kindly contact the PFB office immediately as notice must be given to make the proper arrangements.) Zoological Gardens: See and scamper with the wildlife! Pet and play with the animal offspring in the Daniel W. Dietrich Memorial Children's Zoo; spend a wonderful day at America's foremost Zoological Gardens. Aquarama: Marvel at the swimmers and converse with the Porpoises at the new exciting Aquarama.

Art Within Touch: A rare opportunity for the blind to acquaint themselves with the master works of sculpture. Braille descriptions accompany each work of art; available free. Horse and Buggy: 45-minute tour of Colonial Philadelphia aboard new 15-passenger wagons, with guided lecture and driver leaving hourly from Independence Hall. Harbor Tours: Boat-bus combination tour of Port, including Navy Yard and Schuylkill River plus Center City; one and two-hour cruises daily. Robin Hood Dell: Enjoy free open air concerts nightly. John B. Kelly Playhouse in the Park: Outdoor dramatic presentations. Garden Court Swim Club: 46th and Pine Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, will be available free of charge to all attending the convention on Wednesday evening July 3, 1963, from 7:00 P. M. to 10:30 P. M.

Specific details and arrangements for the above mentioned tours and attractions can be made upon arrival at convention headquarters (Sheraton Hotel).

For reservations: the address and telephone number of the Pennsylvania Federation of the Blind, Philadelphia Office, are: 4517 Walnut Street, Philadelphia 39, Pennsylvania; telephone EV 6-3634.

MEET THE BLIND WHO LEAD THE BLIND

(Editor's note: The following biographical sketches of seven national executive committee members are reprinted from the National

Federation of the Blind's official publication, "Who Are the Blind Who Lead the Blind?" released in January, 1963. For profiles of other prominent leaders, see THE BLIND AMERICAN, April 1963.)

PERRY SUNDQUIST

Member, Executive Committee

Past president of the National Federation, pioneer leader of the organized blind movement in California, veteran administrator of a model state welfare division -- Perry Sundquist has played a distinguished role in the social progress of the blind over the past generation.

Born in 1904 in the Minnesota town of Hibbing, Sundquist received his early education in the public schools and the school for the blind in Washington, and later moved to California to enroll at the famous school for the blind in Berkeley -- where he studied under the late Dr. Newel Perry and first developed his dedicated interest in the educational and organizational cause of the blind.

Sundquist's severe visual impairment did not keep him from going on to earn a B.A. degree in political science in 1928 from the University of California, and to pursue two more years of graduate study there and at the University of Southern California in the fields of education and social work. In 1931 he married a college classmate, Emily Wright, who is now a teacher in the Sacramento public schools.

From his initial election in 1930 as secretary of the Los Angeles County Club of Adult Blind, Sundquist has been continuously and actively involved in the movement of the organized blind. For five years following its formation in 1934, he was vice-president of the California Council of the Blind. From 1936 to 1941 he served as executive secretary of the American Brotherhood for the Blind, and is presently one of its officers. In 1939 he was named president of the Los Angeles County Club.

His long years of association with the National Federation of the Blind were culminated with his election to the first vice-presidency in July, 1961, and his elevation to the presidency some months later, an office which he held until his resignation in July, 1962, and his immediate election to a two-year term on the NFB's Executive Committee.

Sundquist's career in public welfare work with the blind goes back to 1935, when he was appointed by the California Department of Education to conduct a state-wide study of the economic status of the blind. In 1941 he became Chief of the Division for the Blind, California Department of Social Welfare -- a post in which he is still serving with skill and distinction 22 years later. His contributions as an outstanding administrator of welfare programs were given recognition in 1959, when the National Federation of the Blind conferred upon him its Newel Perry Award.

Among the many important posts Sundquist has held are those of board member of the California Conference of Social Work; president of the Central District of the Coordinating Committee on State Services for the Blind; president of the Fort Sutter Chapter, California State Employees' Association, and head of the Division of Public Assistance in the State Department of Social Welfare.

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HAROLD REAGAN

Member, Executive Committee

A long-time leader of the blind in Kentucky, Harold Reagan was first elected to membership on the executive committee of the National Federation of the Blind in 1949 and was again elected in 1961. He was a prime mover in the establishment of the Kentucky Federation of the Blind in 1948 and served continuously as its president until his retirement in 1962. He has also been president of the Alumni Association of the Kentucky School for the Blind and president of the Kentucky Vending Stand Operators Association.

Blinded by a dynamite explosion at the age of eleven, which resulted in the additional loss of his right hand, Reagan attended the Kentucky School for the Blind and went on to the University of Louisville, from which he graduated with an A. B. degree in history. Since 1934, he has been the operator of a successful vending stand business in Louisville.

Reagan's active leadership in the uphill campaign of the Kentucky blind for constructive legislation and improved public

understanding of their capabilities was given symbolic recognition last year when the Kentucky Federation honored its outgoing president with the award of a braille watch for his "outstanding service to the blind" of the state.

* * * * *

WILLIAM J. HOGAN

Member, Executive Committee

A veteran leader in the cause of the organized blind, William Hogan of Bridgeport, Connecticut, was the moving force in the organization of the Connecticut Federation of the Blind and has remained its president through three elections since the group was founded in 1957. He was also instrumental in originating the Bridgeport Association of the Blind, of which he is president and executive director.

It was largely through Hogan's efforts that the Connecticut Federation became affiliated with the National Federation of the Blind in 1951. Bill was first elected to the NFB's Executive Committee in 1959, and most recently re-elected in 1962.

Born in 1905, Hogan lost his sight 24 years later as the result of an automobile accident. Before that he had graduated from St. Augustine's School in Bridgeport and entered high school -- but was forced to leave school and go to work at a variety of trades. He was employed for seven years at the Singer Manufacturing Company, moving from the position of bench work inspector to that of office clerk and eventually to that of production expeditor. Since 1932, he has been employed as information clerk and vending stand operator at the Fairfield County Court House.

Long active in the politics of his state and community, Hogan is presently assistant chairman of the Republican Town Committee and has often played a key role in the nomination of candidates for local, state, and national offices. He also is a member of the Knights of Columbus and the Holy Name Society of St. Augustine's Parish.

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FRANK LUGIANO

Member, Executive Committee

President of the Pennsylvania Federation of the Blind since 1956 and a member of the National Federation's Executive Committee since 1962, Frank Lugiano has been a vigorous campaigner for the blind ever since he lost his own sight while still in his teens. Indeed, his commitment to voluntary organization as a means of self-expression and advancement may be said to date back to his early childhood among the hard-coal fields of Pennsylvania -- heart of the rising union labor movement dominated for a generation by the figure of John L. Lewis.

Shortly after losing his sight in 1918, Lugiano entered the Overbrook School for the Blind in West Philadelphia. Before he graduated eight years later he had become secretary of his class, president of the school athletic association, president of the boy's glee club and captain of the track team as well as other athletic squads.

Not long after his graduation he was invited to become a trainee at the Wilkes-Barre workshop of the Pennsylvania agency for the blind, with the prospect of ultimately becoming executive director. That prospect, however, was quickly dashed when Lugiano courageously settled a shop labor dispute in favor of the blind workers rather than of the management. Although this episode did not endear him to the agency, its sightless employees promptly made him chairman of their grievance committee -- a post which he was to hold for the next 15 years.

During this period Lugiano successfully followed the trade of piano tuner, with an active sideline as pianist. In 1940 he was appointed as a home teacher of the blind under a WPA-sponsored project; and three years later purchased his first vending stand as an independent operator -- moving in 1947 to a new stand location in the courthouse of his own Luzerne County.

Meanwhile, Lugiano's career as an organizer and leader of the blind burgeoned from local participation to a state-wide and finally to a national office. As early as 1927 he inaugurated the Lackawanna (Luzerne County) Recreation Club for the blind, which immediately went to work for legislation to amend the state's constitution in order to create Pennsylvania's famous independent aid program for the blind. He was also instrumental in the formation of the Pennsylvania Educational-Benevolent Society of the Blind in 1929, which focused

its energies on the fight for the separate public-aid program -- later achieved through a constitutional amendment approved overwhelmingly by Pennsylvania voters in 1933. During the four-year campaign, Lugiano spoke before scores of civic groups and helped prepare hundreds of posters and circulars on behalf of the state blind program.

Among his many other activities Lugiano was chairman of the host Wilkes-Barre organization at the pioneer convention in 1940 which established the National Federation of the Blind. In 1943 he was elected president of the Pennsylvania Blind Merchants Guild, which he headed for six terms, followed by three more years as chairman of the board. Today the president of the Pennsylvania Federation of the Blind takes particular pride in his record of perfect attendance at all regular organizational and social meetings of the numerous associations in which he has participated over more than three and a half decades.

In recognition of his contributions to the cause of the Pennsylvania blind, Lugiano has received a number of awards and citations from community and state organizations, among them a gold watch from the Luzerne County Federation (1955) and a bronze plaque from the state Federation (1955) betokening 25 years of service; a scroll and transistor radio from the Pennsylvania Blind Merchants Guild (1959) in recognition of legislative achievements; a transistor radio from Luzerne County organization (1959) for 30 years of perfect attendance; a Silver Jubilee award from the Pennsylvania Federation (1961), and a legion of honor membership award from Philadelphia's Chapel of Four Chaplains in 1962.

In 1942, Lugiano met Miss Dorothy Robson, herself blind, and the two were married on Friday, the 13th of February. Today they own their own home (and fire their own furnace), and have successfully raised a family of seven children.

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AUDREY BASCOM

Member, Executive Committee

President of both the Nevada Federation of the Blind and the Southern Nevada Sightless, Inc., Audrey Bascom of Las Vegas has been an active participant in the organizational struggles of the blind

for more than a decade. She helped to form the effective state-wide association in 1952, and has been its elective head since 1957.

As the main instigator and subsequently director of the Orientation Center for the Blind in Las Vegas, Audrey has secured the warm cooperation of such civic organizations as the Lions Club and Service League in carrying through rapid expansion of the center and its facilities; having obtained a new building in the exclusive possession of the blind, she is presently completing final arrangements for an addition which will be twice the size of the existing structure.

Born and raised in the farming community of Healdton, Oklahoma, where she attended common school and high school, Audrey married Robert Dunham, a football star and noted all-around athlete from Kansas University. Their mutual interest in athletics encouraged her to become interested in active sports competition, and she was soon captain of a girls' softball team and a tournament golfer; but her greatest fame came in bowling, in which she won the Oklahoma doubles championship during the 1939-1940 season, and also served as secretary of the city association of the International Bowling League.

In 1941 Audrey was involved in an automobile accident which cost her the sight of one eye and, by the following year, of both eyes. After a two-year period of "vegetating," she was induced to make a comeback both to competitive life and to competitive sports (becoming once again captain of the Boykder Club bowling team). Today she is an active member of the advisory board of the state Bureau of Services for the Blind; the Vegas Valley Business and Professional Women's Club; the auxiliaries of the Eagles and of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, and the Old-Timers Association of the Union Pacific Railroad.

Among the many productive ventures originated by Audrey, the one which gives her greatest satisfaction is her achievement in gaining admission of blind children to the public schools of southern Nevada -- and now obtaining tape recordings of textbooks for these blind students. Hardly less remarkable has been her accomplishment in bringing about close and friendly cooperation among the organized blind of Nevada, the state's welfare department and its Bureau of Services for the Blind -- and not least of all the Lions Clubs of southern Nevada, which have furnished consistent encouragement and support in her organizational and educational campaigns to improve the self-confidence and self-sufficiency of the blind people of the state.

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ANITA O'SHEA

Member, Executive Committee

Miss O'Shea, a native of Springfield, Massachusetts, was elected to the NFB's board of directors in 1961 as the climax of a decade's active participation and leadership in the organized movement of the blind in her state. A member of the executive board of the Greater Springfield Association of the Blind since 1952, she was named five years later to the board of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts. Shortly thereafter, she became the ABM's second vice-president, attained the presidency a year later (1958), and in 1959 was elected to a full two-year term as president. She was chosen by the NFB in 1960 for a one-year term on the executive committee, and was elected to a two-year term the following year.

Educated at Perkins School for the Blind, of Watertown, Massachusetts -- where she was equally active in dramatic presentations and athletic activities -- Miss O'Shea went on to intensive preparation for a career as medical secretary, first through attendance at secretarial school and later through private instruction and self-instruction. As a result of this concentration she has been employed since 1959 as a medical secretary with the Wesson Memorial Hospital in Springfield.

During her tenure as president of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts, Miss O'Shea was instrumental in the launching of several new programs for the blind, notably the establishment of an advisory committee which meets regularly with the director of the state's Division for the Blind. She also inaugurated a Job Opportunities Committee which has had substantial success in informing potential employers of the vocational and professional capacities of blind persons.

In the fall of 1958, Miss O'Shea initiated a highly effective braille class for Springfield's Jewish Community Center, which has since produced an ever-expanding pool of volunteer transcribers to meet the needs of blind college students and pupils in the public schools. A number of her trainees have themselves become braille instructors, training more volunteer transcribers and recruiting readers for tape-recorded programs. In 1960 she was appointed by the Mayor of Springfield as general chairman for the 80th birthday celebration of Helen Keller.

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THOMAS F. MOODY

Member, Executive Committee

T. F. Moody, a luminary from the Lone Star State, was elected to the NFB's Executive Committee at its 1961 convention, as the climax to a rising career of leadership in organizations of the blind in his home state.

A resident of Houston, Texas, Moody served for many years on the board of directors of the Houston Council of the Blind, then a chapter of the Lone Star State Federation of the Blind. From 1959 to 1962 he was a member of the state federation's board of directors; and today he is president of its Houston chapter, the Associated Blind of Greater Houston, which he organized himself.

Before losing his sight at the age of 13, Moody received his first six years of education in the public schools of Waco and Houston, where he was consistently at the head of his class. While in the seventh grade he was totally blinded as the result of an injury, which put a temporary end to his schooling. But in 1934 he resumed his education at the Texas State School for the Blind in Austin, graduating five years later with highest honors.

Although awarded a university scholarship, young Moody chose to return to the school for the blind following graduation for a summer course in vending-stand operation and management. Eventually he was able to secure a vending stand, under the Randolph-Sheppard Act, and has since followed that occupation almost without interruption for 20 years. He did, however, serve a wartime stint as a bench inspector of machine-gun tripods at the McEvoy manufacturing plant in Houston. Today he operates a vending and newsstand in the lobby of Houston's Main Post Office.

Two of his accomplishments with the Lone Star State Federation in which Moody takes justifiable pride are his efforts to build the organization's credit union into a going financial concern, and his brilliant editorship from 1959 to 1962 of the state federation's quarterly journal, THE LONE STAR LEADER.

PROFILE OF A BLIND OSTEOPATH

A blind Doctor of Osteopathy, William Brannon of Evanston, Illinois, is the subject of a biographical article published in the April (1963) issue of PAGEANT Magazine. The five-page profile, written by Theodore Berland, relates the unusual life and career of the 45-year-old D. O. who lost his sight in infancy as the aftermath of an influenza attack.

Before he entered grade school, young Brannon had been taught braille by his mother, who learned the punctiform method in order to transcribe his class books as well as to assist the boy's general reading, according to the article. Later his parents created a braille arithmetic slate which has since gained wide acceptance.

In high school the youngster became a boy scout, a sports reporter for the student paper, president of the radio club and a member of the honor society. He also swam, rode horseback, wrote poetry, and won a prize for raising flowers.

As an engineering student at Wisconsin's Beloit College, Bill Brannon barely missed Phi Beta Kappa, was co-founder and captain of the wrestling team and won a letter in competitive swimming. After graduation he tried his hand at selling insurance, with such success that he became the youngest man to be included in the 1940 book Today's Young Men (side by side with such notables as Thomas E. Dewey and Edward R. Stettinius).

Despite his success young Brannon soon went on to the Kirksville (Missouri) School of Osteopathy, graduating second from the top in his class. After 19 years of practice in Evanston, the PAGEANT story points out, "he has filled his file cabinets with the Braille records of more than 25,000 patients." Last May he was invited to act as honorary chairman of the state osteopathic convention.

In 1962, Dr. Brannon passed rigorous state medical examinations in order to receive an unrestricted license to practice which includes the prescription of drugs. The opportunity had been newly opened to Illinois osteopaths in 1959 on condition that they pass the gruelling tests for all medical-school graduates -- involving over 200 questions to be answered in three hours. Dr. Brannon, out of school for nearly two decades, barely failed to make the grade his

first time around, but spent much of the following year cramming for a second try. The article reports that he scored near the top, 88 percent, on the state examinations -- thereby earning the unlimited osteopathic license.

BROTHERS . . . & OTHERS

Newton Ottone Honored. Newton Ottone, head of the Springfield Association for the Blind and longtime leader of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts, was honored recently by American Bosch Division of American Bosch Arma Corporation on the 35th anniversary of his employment with the firm.

Presented with a gold watch specially equipped with a braille face, Ottone was cited both for his record with the company and for his contributions to the organized blind of Massachusetts. He is presently employed in the service packaging section of the plant and is reportedly an expert at packaging small parts.

Ottone, whose accomplishments include having been a Scout Master, has been blind for 25 years. He lives with his wife in Springfield, where he was instrumental in securing a Chapter House for the Springfield Association.

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Part-Time Employment Offered. An unusual opportunity for part-time employment of blind persons as "field monitoring personnel" -- to tape-record radio and television programs and commercials for advertising checking purposes -- has been made available by a Chicago corporation. In response to our request, the company has provided the following details of the offer:

"Persons, from ANY area, with a tape recorder capable of using up to and including 7-inch diameter tape reels, and with speeds of at least 3.75 ips (1/4 or 1/2 track), and with a 'direct wired' connection from their recorder to their AM, FM or TV set, can apply

for positions as 'field monitoring personnel,' by sending their name and address, etc., to AIR CHECK SERVICES CORPORATION OF AMERICA, Mr. Richard Drost, 1743 West Nelson Street, Chicago 13, Illinois. They will then receive a letter detailing operations, as well as a card which must be filled out in its entirety and sent back to be placed on file."

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New Mexico Orientation Center. "The voice of the blind themselves has been heard for the first time in the state of New Mexico," writes New Mexico Federation President Pauline Gomez in the March N.M.F.B. NEWSLETTER. Her reference is to recent passage by the state Legislature of a Senate bill establishing an interim joint committee of the Legislature to study the possibility of a state Orientation Center for the Blind.

The bill, which was passed unanimously in the House with only a single Senate vote against it, was the result of intensive and persistent work by Miss Gomez and other Federation leaders in conjunction with the District 40 Lions Club. Among New Mexico Federationists who were instrumental in seeing the measure through the legislative mill are Albert Gonzales, Tony Moya, Sam Chavez, Fred Humphreys and Joseph Bursey.

That the cooperation of State agency officials was less than perfect in the stormy course of legislative hearings and debate on the proposals is indicated by President Gomez' comment: "Much to my dismay, throughout the promoting of this bill, a rumbling of discord was heard from staff of the Division of Services for the Blind and from some of the staff of the state workshops."

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Talking Machines Planned. Talking machines which would be able, among other things, to "read" books to the blind are in the planning stage at Bell Telephone Laboratories, according to a company release.

The way it works is that speech sounds indicated on punched cards are fed in sequence into a computer, which has been "programmed" to respond with simulated vocal effects. Each card can also carry pitch and timing data for natural phrasing, intonation or even singing.

The talking-machine project is an outgrowth of Bell Labs'

continuing research to better understand the phenomenon of speech, then use this knowledge for new ways to carry speech efficiently over communications systems, according to the company.

"Two good uses of a talking machine are readily apparent: voiceless persons could have the machine talk for them; and books could be made into punched cards so they could be 'read' to the blind."

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Blind Rehab in Uganda. More than 175 blind Africans have been trained in agricultural and rural crafts over the past six years at the Salama Rural Training Center in Uganda, according to an article in the May (1963) issue of THE NEW OUTLOOK. The author, W. Jackson, is a member of the overseas staff of the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind who has spent nearly five years working with the Uganda Foundation for the Blind.

Faced with an estimated blind population of between 37,000 and 50,000, British and Uganda officials began a decade ago to plan for rehabilitation services centering on the needs of an essentially agricultural economy, Jackson wrote. "In this system there is a place for the blind farmer; indeed, there is not only a place -- there is a need."

Although most blind Ugandans were productively engaged when services were begun, "a few were more enterprising and were unprepared to let blindness defeat them; they were keeping shops, making mats, and playing music," Jackson said. "The blind women were more active and were marrying and making good wives. I am told that there is little difference between the price of a blind bride and a sighted bride; the custom being that the male pays the bride price in cattle."

Training at the Salama Center is mainly agricultural but includes classes in braille, English and arithmetic, handicrafts and music. After a year of training and instruction, the graduate receives a certificate and is assisted in resettlement on farming land in his home area. The article concludes that "the rehabilitated blind person, armed with the knowledge of agriculture and the will to succeed, can not only make a contribution to his family and country but can make himself a worthy and respected member of his community."

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Library Notes. An annotated list of selected press braille books, talking books and books on magnetic tape -- entitled Reading for Profit -- is now available in a revised, large-print edition, according to the NEWSLETTER of the Library of Congress's Division for the Blind. A braille edition as well is being ordered. . . . The World Book Encyclopedia also is planning a large-type edition, to be released early in 1964. . . . The Division for the Blind is now working on a plan to duplicate by the Thermoform process at least some of the hand-copied braille books transcribed for the collection at the Library of Congress. This move is expected to provide copies for some of the Regional Libraries for the Blind, so that maximum use can be made of these hand-transcribed books. . . . The second Conference of Regional Librarians for the Blind was held in Washington May 8-10, under sponsorship of the Division for the Blind. Emphasis of the meeting was on the resolution of problems of growth and expansion of services, as well as on developing routines for the more efficient use of library staff and book resources.

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New Switchboard Device. A new device that enables a blind person to operate a telephone switchboard efficiently has been developed by the Bell Telephone System to increase employment opportunities for the handicapped. According to the Bell System, this device makes it easier for businesses to hire blind people as switchboard attendants. The new attachment is simple to use and requires little training.

The device utilizes a special probe equipped with a tiny photo transistor. The probe "sees" the face of the switchboard by converting light signals to audible sounds which are heard in the blind attendant's phone headset.

The retractable cord probe connects to a small box which houses the operating mechanism. In addition, there is a narrow panel of special pilot lamps mounted on the face of the switchboard. These attachments are now available for several standard Bell System switchboards and will soon be adaptable to most other models.

Major advantage of this new device is its ease of use. Basically, it guides a blind person's hand by sound signals to the correct location, or "jack," on a switchboard. Calls are then connected or disconnected in a normal way.

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"TV Sight" for the Blind. A pioneer of American television has predicted that a system of "electronic vision" for the blind will be perfected within the next quarter-century, according to an Associated Press dispatch from Montreux, Switzerland. Dr. Allen B. DuMont, founder of DuMont Laboratories of New Jersey, related his belief to scientists attending an international television conference in the Swiss city.

"There are outstanding scientists who are firmly convinced that we will be able eventually to feed electrical waves directly to the human brain," DuMont said. He claimed that this could eventually be done with such precision, in combination with the human nervous system, that "a blind person will actually enjoy television pictures."

The American TV expert predicted that miniature TV cameras soon will be developed weighing less than a pound, making them easily transportable by a blind person receiving electronic signals directly to his brain.
